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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, the source of our joy, in this season of gratitude, thank You for Your sustaining power and unsurpassed greatness.

Lord, we borrow our heartbeats from You each day. Search the hearts of our lawmakers, guiding them with Your wisdom and empowering them with Your might. In all their labors, may they work for Your glory. Help them to stand true to what they believe, maintaining a clear conscience in all they think, do, and say. May they acknowledge You in every area of their lives, knowing that You will direct their path. Supply all their needs from Your glorious riches.

We pray in Your gracious Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

WORK BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it has been a busy and exciting week as we have welcomed new Members, assembled our leadership teams for the

115th Congress, and gotten to work on important issues.

Today we will have an opportunity to take up a bill that is particularly important for Gulf Coast States like Louisiana. Senator CASSIDY has been a leader on this issue, and I appreciate the work he has done to bring this measure up for a vote.

Sometime this session we will also take up an extension of the Iran Sanctions Extension Act, which passed the House overwhelmingly. This bipartisan bill will provide the basis for any sanctions that may be reimposed on Iran, which is critical, given the belligerent behavior exhibited by Tehran since the signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. I expect we will pass it on an overwhelmingly bipartisan basis here as well.

Discussions are also ongoing on how to fund the government and for how long, as I noted yesterday. I will have more to say on that issue as more details are available.

So we all have some work to do. Let's get together to finish up the business of this Congress as we begin looking forward to the next.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY TO HEAL WOUNDS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, two days ago I came to the Senate floor and called upon the President-elect to rise to the dignity of his office. I called upon Mr. Trump to take responsibility for his rhetoric and his actions and to work to heal the wounds that he created.

I am disappointed to say that our President-elect has chosen to do none of those things to this point. Meanwhile, vile acts of hate and intimidat-

tion continue to occur all across America.

On Tuesday, I said that the Southern Poverty Law Center had reported 315 hate crimes since the election. As of Wednesday, that number jumped to 437. That is a 40-percent increase in 2 days. That is startling.

Here are just a few examples of the instances that have been reported. In Michigan, a Latino family awoke to find that someone had used boxes to form a wall blocking their driveway. The perpetrators left behind vulgar graffiti that denigrated Mexican Americans and praised Donald Trump for "taking back America."

In Tennessee, two men returned home to find a threatening homophobic note. Using gay slurs, the message told the men to go back where they came from. A folding knife with a picture of Donald Trump on the handle was stabbed through the paper.

At a high school in Missouri, a 15-year-old African-American student was burned with a hot glue gun and told he didn't belong in America. Another African-American student at the same school was told by a White student: "Are you ready to get back on the boat now that Trump is President?"

This morning the Washington Post editorial board related this story of a student at Baylor:

The morning after Donald Trump's election as president, a student at Baylor University had a nasty, hate-filled encounter on her way to class. A native of Zambia, she was called the n-word by another student, who shoved her off the sidewalk and said he was "just trying to make America great again," the signature slogan of Mr. Trump's campaign. What is perhaps most appalling about the incident is that it was not isolated.

As I said, I picked just a few examples. There are hundreds of these same kinds of things happening, as we speak, across the country. These are sickening acts of hate, prejudice, and just simple meanness, and they need to be stopped.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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